



Committee: Education, Energy, and the Environment
Testimony on: HB0299 - Environment - Synthetic Turf - Chain of Custody
Organization: Maryland Legislative Coalition Climate Justice Wing
Submitting: Laurie McGilvray, Co-Chair
Position: Favorable
Hearing Date: March 23, 2022

Dear Chair and Committee Members:

Thank you for allowing our testimony today in support of HB299. The Maryland Legislative Coalition (MLC) Climate Justice Wing, a statewide coalition of over 50 grassroots and professional organizations, urges you to vote favorably on HB299.

HB299 will require the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) to: 1) establish a system to track the lifecycle chain of custody of synthetic turf and turf infill installed on sports playing fields sold or distributed in Maryland; 2) require current and future owners/transporters of fields to report to MDE on synthetic turf and turf infill whenever it changes custody; and 3) require MDE to post the chain of custody information on synthetic turf and turf infill playing fields on its website.

Currently, there is no official inventory of the number or location of synthetic turf playing fields in Maryland or where used fields go, once they are removed, usually every 8-10 years. Tracking synthetic fields throughout their lifecycle is extremely important to protect both public health and the environment. Many components of synthetic turf fields are toxic, including heavy metals, carcinogens, endocrine disruptors, PFAS (“forever chemicals”) and more. Also, discarded synthetic turf fields can be a source of microplastics in the environment.

HB299 represents a common-sense solution to keeping tracking of synthetic turf fields once they are removed and every time the material is transported. It is simply good public accountability and transparency, and HB299 ensures that MDE can keep track of synthetic turf materials and that the public can stay informed.

We recommend a **FAVORABLE** report for HB299 in committee.